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CIA man turns up in Moscow saying Cold War is dead

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By FRANCIS CURTA

MOSCOW, May 17 (AFP) - "The Cold War is over," former Central Intelligence Agency Director William E. Colby said Thursday as he sat in a hotel facing the Kremlin.

"Of course the KGB is going to continue its work", focusing more attention on industrial espionage and the evasion of western restrictions to the export of high technology, but in the field of subversion "there has been a drop in active Soviet involvement around the world," he told a seminar.

He cited the Soviet Union's greater reluctance to support national liberation movements, adding that recently "they sat still for the Nicaraguan affair".

But even with the end of the Cold War between the two super-powers, intelligence and intelligence services will still be needed, notably for the purpose of providing analysis, for the verification of agreements and to deal with threats such as terrorism, he said.

"But the more comes over the table, the less will be needed from under the table," he added.

Mr. Colby, on his first visit to the Soviet Union, said: "The most surprising thing about my trip is that I should be here in the first place."

The former CIA chief, who headed the organisation from 1973 to 1976 and who oversaw the agency's operations in Vietnam in the 1960's, spent two days in Leningrad before travelling to Moscow as part of his week-long trip to the Soviet Union.

In Moscow to attend a seminar organised by the U.S. centre for War, Peace and the News Media, he was staying at an ordinary Soviet hotel rather than embassy premises, adding of the KGB: "I don't think they're following me."

He said he was glad to be able to see the Soviet Union at first hand, and had long advocated sending young CIA analysts over here as "tourists" to get a feel for the country.

He was still unsure whether he might be meeting any KGB officials, but stressed that in a changing "new world" there is a possibility for some cooperation between the CIA and the KGB though "on a very limited basis".

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Speaking of the man across the street at the Kremlin, President Mikhail Gorbachev, Mr. Colby said the United States had long "misperceived" him.

"We thought of him as an ideologue, and he turns out to be a very adroit politician," he said.

Mr. Gorbachev had managed to consolidate his position politically, but "he hasn't dared bite the bullet in economic terms", he added.

The Soviet president has been held back in his economic reforms by fear of a popular backlash to higher inflation and unemployment and so, in economic terms, he "has failed, but for sensible reasons".

The president though was "holding on to the reins of power" and might even consider his position strong enough to relinquish his job of communist party chief at the next congress in July, Mr. Colby said.

Mr. Gorbachev, he also suggested, wanted to sign a strategic arms agreement at the Washington summit in early June as a treaty "will serve as a diversion from troubles at home". An agreement in principle on Strategic Arms Reduction Talks would be reached in time for the summit, he added.

It was also in the West's interest to collect on the "peace dividend" which resulted from the end to the Cold War and which had cost some 800 billion dollars per year, he said.

The two super-powers could go much further towards achieving a "minimum deterrence", he also said, adding that in his view this could be done with 1,000 strategic warheads on each side, rather than the 12,000 each side currently holds.

An agreement on conventional forces reductions in Europe could also be achieved by December, though the talks were fast being taken over by events on the ground, including the disintegration of the Warsaw Pact military alliance, he said.

The two super-powers might however be able to move straight into Conventional Forces in Europe mark-II talks which would provide for further reductions in the number of troops deployed in central Europe, maybe down to a total of 100,000 men on each side instead of the 195,000 currently envisaged, he said.

U.S. forces of 40,000 men had managed to keep the peace by acting as a trip-wire in Korea, he noted.

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